A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Saturday, October 15. 1709.

I Took the Freedom in my laſt to enquire into a ſtrange new-faſhion'd Myſtery, a Kind of ſham Plague lately come upon us——As if we had not National Afflictions enough otherways—This is what in my laſt I call'd

DEARTH and PLENTY.

That the Price of Corn throughout the whole Iſland is extravagantly high; but eſpecially in and about *London*, is a Truth, I need not tell any Body; Experience will give you all a good Account of that, and your Pockets may be your Informers: But that at the ſame time the whole Nation is full of Corn, even to the remoteſt *Northern* Angle of *Scotland*, this will be ſuch a Paradox, that when it comes to be examin'd into, muſt tell us—we are groſſly impos'd upon; that it is very neceſſary to enquire into the Particulars, and to do Juſtice on thoſe that are the Cauſe of it, let them be who it will.

In my laſt I gave you an Account of ſome of my own Obſervations, relating to the Quantity of Corn, through the Center of this whole Iſland; I have been an Eye-Witneſs to a very great and very happy Harveſt in great many Places—— I am writing this Paper in *Scotland*, where I can look out of my Window, and ſee the Fields ſtanding full of the Shocks of Corn, the Quantity great, the Sheaves heavy, the Seaſon kindly, and all Hands buſie carrying it home,—— The Farmers Yards are full

of Stacks of Corn already carry'd in. The Country People are chearful and glad-hearted at the Sight of their Corn, the Miniſters are on every Occaſion giving GOD Thanks for the good Seaſon——— In ſhort, it has pleas'd GOD every where to cauſe the Earth to bring forth Plenty of Food, for Man and Beaſt, and the Year is crown'd with his Bleſſing—— Nor can I, by diligent Enquiry, find out one Place, where they have any Scarcity; ſome Places may be worſe furniſh'd, and the Corn be either poorer or backwarder than others; and I know, the low Lands in *Lincolnſhire* and the Iſle of *Ely* were pretty much drowned in the Fore-part of the Year—— But nothing of Scarcity can be pretended to any where.

What then can be ſaid for this unaccountable Price of Corn? —— And where, Gentlemen, *at* London *eſpecially*, are your Senſes, to let a Parcel of Scoundrels impoſe upon you in the moſt neceſſary Article of Life, and cheat you in a Manner ſo deſtructive to the common Good? Are ye not ſtock-jobb'd enough, and have ye not been diſcounted and bear-ſkin'd enough, but you muſt be Corn-jobb'd? — Strange! What Things are *Engliſh* Folks, that they run into every Pit, are taken in every Snare, bite at every Hook? —— The *French* are ſtarv'd for Want of a Crop growing; the *Dutch* are pinch'd, becauſe they dare not fetch it at *Dantzick* for Fear of the Plague; 'tis ſcarce in *Portugal*, becauſe the Frontiers are ravag'd; and in *Spain*, becauſe of the great Armies: But it is dear in *England*, for no Reaſon that I know of, but becauſe we have more than we can devour; I ſay *no Reaſon*, becauſe there is no Reaſon to be given for it, but what we ought to be aſham'd to give; no Reaſon, but becauſe we have F——s Magiſtrates, and K——s People.

Was ever any Nation bewitch'd before? DEARTH and PLENTY! That's like Crutches inſtead of Shoes, to go a Journey; 'tis dying for Fear of Death; 'tis like Tears without Sorrow; 'tis mixing of Contraries; joyning the *Poles*; 'tis in ſhort a moſt prepoſterous and unaccountable Piece of Contradiction, and what no People can account for, but thoſe that have already accounted for the Loſs of their Politick Underſtanding, and are profeſs'd Antipodes to themſelves.

Would you leave of talking the Diſeaſe, and propoſe the Remedy, ſays One to me, that ſtands by at the Writing of this—— Remedy! Why, what Remedy for Lunaticks? Bedlamites are generally reduc'd by afflicting the Senſe; it is Nonſenſe to ſay of a Mad-man, *he is out of his Senſes*; the Thing is quite of another Kind, he is out of his *Reaſon*: Mad-men hear, ſee, taſte, ſmell, feel, and have all Natural Operations free; the Defect lies in the Rational Performances; and to recover this, Phyſicians preſs the Senſes, that they may cry out and waken the Soul, which ſeems doz'd and aſleep; for a Lunatick is only a Man talking in his Sleep, with this Difference, that one talks when the Body is aſleep, and the other has his Soul aſleep——

The Nation is certainly lunatick, their Soul is aſleep, and who can waken them? You muſt even pinch their National Senſes, and let them ſmart a little, and that will wake them——— Is it not Nonſenſe to aſk me a Remedy for this ridiculous Malady? —— Is it for me to cure a Lunatick Nation? —— Have they Eyes? Have they Hands? Have they Feet? Have they a Head? — Bid them uſe them—or ſtarve, and buy Corn dear, till Want reſtores their National Capacities——— Have they Eyes LAWS, Feet MAGISTRATES? *Say Juſtices or ſuch like* B——s, *God help us*. Have they Hands POWER? Have they a Head GOVERMENT? Let them uſe them—let them exert themſelves——let them ſet the Wheels of Regulation to work, and it will ſoon be ſeen, whether or no they were mad before.

I would be loth to ſuppoſe, our Magiſtrates ſhould ſay, how ſhall we do this? — Tho' never poor Nation had ſuch Peace-Officers as our Juſtices, nor ever any Nation ſuch an Execution of Laws—Tho' ſeveral Sets of our purblind Bench-Mongers have moſt gravely met to do nothing about this weighty Affair, yet I am loth to ſuggeſt, it was for Want of Wit; and tho' I ſhould be forc'd to think it was for Want of Honeſty,

I could not perſwade my ſelf to ſpeak of the Want of Knowledge.

What, not know when Corn ſhould be dear or cheap, not know when we have Dearth, and when Plenty? *No, no, Gentlemen*, 'ye are none of you that Kind of F——s ——It cannot be Ignorance——— And fain would I call it by a ſofter Word than that of K——y ——— I was going to call it Connivance—but that looks ſo like K——y, 'tis like the Advertiſement in the *Daily-Courant*, about Coals to be given for making an Alderman—— It look'd ſo like Bribery, that it differ'd nothing from it, but as giving of Coals, which coſt Money, differ'd from giving of Money——— And ſome are ſo ill-natur'd as to ſay, that's *Nothing at all*.

But what ſhall we ſay to the Remedy? And what ſhall we ſay to three Benches of Juſtices, that met to ſay juſt nothing at all to it—or in plain *Engliſh*, could not tell what to do in it? ——— This was like the Town-Council of *Plymouth*, who, as Story tells, when Queen *Elizabeth* ſent them Notice of an expected Invaſion in 1688, wiſely debated, concerning the Import of the Word Invaſion—and having long diſcours'd upon it, and what her Majeſty ſhould mean by this Word Invaſion, were at laſt inform'd by one graver than the reſt—That when her Majeſty ſent them Word, *there would be an Invaſion*, it was much as to ſay, *there would be an Invaſion*; and ſo the Aſſembly broke up.

Be the Fact a Story or a Hiſtory, the Caſe is the ſame; it bears much of a Parallel, with the Meeting of a certain Body of Juſta....s, to conſider of reducing the Price of Corn in the County of ....., who, after long Debates were harangued, with a moſt elegant Speech, ſignifying, That Corn was really ſold *very dear*, and that Corn ought not to be ſold *ſo dear*—— and that it was great Pity Corn ſhould be ſold *ſo dear*—— That the Poor would ſuffer very much if Corn was ſold *ſo dear*, that it was unreaſonable Corn ſhould be ſold *ſo dear*, and he could not ſee why Corn ſhould be ſold *ſo dear*; that for his Part he was againſt Corn being ſold *ſo dear*——— And ſo dear Mr. *Juſtice* ſat him down, and diſmiſs'd the Cauſe; for the Aſſembly, after agreeing to all his moſt wiſe Reſolves, adjourn'd to the next Meeting.

This wiſe and moſt ſignificant nothing-doing Aſſembly have made a mighty Precedent for reducing the Miſeries of the Poor, and examining into a Thing ſo weighty as this——: What, tho' her Majeſty repeats and inculcates to ſuch Men as theſe the Execution of the Laws, and leaves the Relief of her good Subjects to their Management; till her Majeſty ſhall puniſh ſome of the Neglects of thoſe Law-Cheats, we ſhall have no more executive Power put forth among us.

The Reaſon, why the King of *France* has his Laws better executed than we, lies only in this, That he knows how to hang his Juſtices, as well as they know how to puniſh the People: Indeed, if we had but here and there a *Bridewell* for a Whoring Juſtice, a Pair of Capital Stocks for the High Conſtable and drunken Magiſtrates, and an Eccleſiaſtical Whipping-Poſt for ſwearing Prebendaries and lewd Clergy, we might hope for ſome Reformation, and to have our Laws put in Execution a little——— But till ſomething like that is done, Laws and Authority in *England* are empty Trifles; the Rich laugh at the Juſtices Banter, and the Poor bid Defiance to by their Example.

Jack and his Maſter lying both in a Room in a cold Winter Night; *Jack*, ſays the Maſter; *ay*, *Maſter*, *quoth* Jack; *I believe that Window's open*, *Jack*, ſays the Maſter; *I believe it is*, *Maſter*, ſays *Jack*——— By and by he calls again as before—— *Jack*, ſays the Maſter; *ay Maſter*, *ſays* Jack; *would that Window was ſhut*; Jack, ſays the Maſter; *would it was Maſter*, ſays *Jack*——— A while after he calls again—— *Jack*, ſays the Maſter; *ay Maſter*, ſays *Jack*; *the Wind comes very cold at that Window*, Jack, ſays the Maſter; *ay ſo it does Maſter*, ſays *Jack*—— At laſt the Maſter crys, *Jack*, *ye Dog*, *why don't you riſe and ſhut that Window*; *if I come to you*, *I'll break your Head*, &c. *Ay Maſter*, ſays *Jack*, *now you ſpeak like a Maſter*, and up he gets, and ſhuts the Window—.

I leave the Application to those, who ought to correct the abhorr'd Neglect, the Vices, the ill Examples, the Connivence, and the Bribery of our most scandalous Magistracy, and shall go on with the Remedy for this Affair of the Corn in my next.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

SIR *WILLIAM READ*, Her Majesty's OCCULIST, being very sensible, that many of Her Majesty's Soldiers must have receiv'd Damage in their Eyes, or Visive Faculty, in the late bloody and unparalel'd Battle, thought fit to give publick Notice, for the Benefit of all such Persons, that HE will constantly attend at his House in *Durham-Yard* in the *Strand*—Where all such Persons, bringing Certificates from their respective Officers, shall be kindly receiv'd, and all due Care taken in order to their speedy Cure *Gratis*; As has been his constant Practice, ever since the Beginning of the WAR.

*** *NOTE*, Sir *WILLIAM READ* couches Cataracts *Gratis*, to all such poor People as shall be recommended to him as fit Objects of Charity. He hath several to couch this Month and the next, at his House aforesaid, where he has successfully perform'd above one Hundred such Operations since *Lady-Day* last— And any Gentleman or Lady shall be welcome to see that curious Operation perform'd, at his House aforesaid.

HE also cureth the poor *Palatines Gratis.*

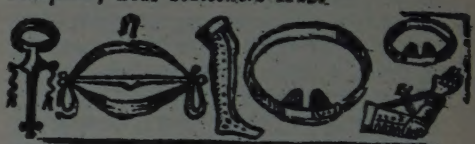
Lately Publish'd,

Electarum de Lingua Latina Observationum Libri duo. Prior inscribitur Latini loquendi Norma; *h. e. aurei Latinitatis Seculi* Locutio. *Posterior Barbare vitioseve loquendi Consuetudinem investigat, patefacit, emendat. Uterque in Usum Juventutis, incorruptæ Latini Sermonis Integritatis studiosæ, confectus. Ductu & Cura* JOANNIS KER. *Londini, apud* J. Robinson, J. Lawrence, C. Bateman, A. Bell, & J. Hartley, *Bibliopolas Londinenses.*

Just publish'd,

A New Description of the World, delineating *Europe*, *Asia*, *Africa*, and *America*; with a Map and Tables of the Empires, Kingdoms, Provinces, and Cities therein, together with a Chronological and Historical Account of the Emperors, Kings, Princes, Governments, Religion, Languages, Customs, Commodities, Revolutions, and Rareties thereof. The second Edition. By *H. Curson*, Gent. Sold by *J. Woodward*, in St. *Christopher's Church-Yard*, in *Thread-needle-street.*

THE Monthly Miscellany, or Memoirs for the Curious, for *May*, 1709. Vol. III. Containing, *Fossilia* Sheppeianæ *Catalogus. African* Plants. Plants growing about the *Cape of Good Hope.* Of the Origine of the Art of *Writing.* Continuation of the Discourse of *Languages.* GOD farther vindicated, from the Aspersions of those of the *Upper* and *Lower* Way. Essay on Duelling, continu'd. Printed for *J. Woodward*, in St. *Christopher's* Church-Yard, *Thread-needle-Street*; and Sold by *John Morphew*, near *Stationers-Hall.*



BARTLETT's Inventions for the Cure of Ruptures, which have gain'd so Universal Esteem, are now, yet farther Improv'd to so great a Nicety, that one of his Steel Spring Trusses of the largest Size, seldom Exceeds 4 ounces in Weight, and one of the smallest rarely exceeds a quarter of an Ounce, and are so well adapted to the Shapes of human Bodies, that they are extraordinary easy even to New-born Infants, and Intirely keep up the Ruptures of what Bigness soever. Also divers Instruments to help the Weak and Crooked. By P. Bartlett at the Golden Ball by the Ship Tavern in Prelcot-Street in Goodmans Fields, London.

N. B. His Mother, the Widow of the late Mr. *Christopher Bartlett*, lives at the Place above-mention'd, and is very skilful in the Business of her own Sex.